

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 697

By Dickerson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. Ted Houston Welch of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. Ted Houston Welch of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a powerhouse in the commercial real estate community and a legendary political fundraiser at the state and national levels, Ted Welch was a distinguished civic leader and esteemed businessman; and

WHEREAS, as a businessman, Mr. Welch helped reshape downtown Nashville, developing a number of office buildings, including the convention center and the Renaissance Office Tower, where he maintained his business offices for nearly thirty years; and

WHEREAS, born in 1933, Ted Houston Welch was the son of Hilda Houston and Lewis Welch, both one-room schoolhouse teachers, and grew up on a small farm near Parsons in Decatur County; he worked alongside his brother Fred, following the wheat harvest, to earn money to send his parents to college so they could become teachers; and

WHEREAS, having received a football scholarship, Mr. Welch earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1955 at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he was captain of the football team; a member of the boxing, track, and tennis teams; and president of his junior class; and

WHEREAS, an industrious gentleman in every phase of his life, Ted Welch attended Indiana University's Business School and began his professional career as a student salesman

and manager with the Southwestern Publishing Company, becoming a full-time employee in 1958; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch would remain at Southwestern until 1971, honing his world class salesmanship skills as he rose up the ranks to become Executive Vice President and a member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, accepting the call to public service, Ted Welch was named Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration by Governor Winfield Dunn and served with acumen and alacrity in that position from 1971 to 1974; and

WHEREAS, leaving state government at the conclusion of the Dunn administration, Ted Welch began his masterful career as a political fundraiser as the State Finance Chairman for Lamar Alexander's first bid for Governor in 1974; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch would go on to serve as Finance Chairman of the Tennessee Republican Party, Finance Chairman of the National Committee and established the Eagles Program; and

WHEREAS, upon their requests, Ted Welch raised significant funds for Presidential candidates Howard Baker, Ronald Reagan, George Herbert Walker Bush, Bob Dole, and John Connally; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch and Senator Howard Baker co-founded the Republican Majority Fund (1981-1986) to support U.S. Senate and House candidates; the fund grew into the second-largest political action committee in the nation; and

WHEREAS, very active in the re-election campaign of President Ronald Reagan, Ted Welch served as Chair of the President's Dinner in 1985, which raised more than \$6 million to support U.S. Senate and House candidates; his efforts as Chairman of the Southern Republican Leadership Conference saw attendance double to 1,500 participants in 1986; and

WHEREAS, named the Tennessee Republican Statesman of the Year in 1987, Ted Welch served as Regional Finance Chairman for both Bush/Quayle presidential election campaigns, was elevated to National Finance Chairman for the primary, and served as National Chairman for Victory '92 for the general election; and

WHEREAS, always answering the call of duty to work in the campaigns of his friend, Lamar Alexander, Mr. Welch served as Finance Chairman for Mr. Alexander's 1996 and 2000 Presidential campaigns and for Mr. Alexander's Senatorial campaign; and

WHEREAS, Ted Welch raised \$11.3 million as General Chairman of the Republican National Committee's annual fundraising gala, a record amount in 1997; and in 2000, he served on the Executive Finance Committee of Bush for President, and as Finance Chairman of Tenn PAC, which he co-founded with Lamar Alexander; and

WHEREAS, during his extraordinary fundraising career, Ted Welch assisted a cornucopia of elected officials from Presidents Ronald Reagan, George Herbert Walker Bush, and George W. Bush, to U.S. Senators Howard Baker, Bill Brock, Bob Corker, Bill Frist, and Fred Thompson, U.S. Representative Marsha Blackburn, and Tennessee Speaker of the House Beth Harwell; and

WHEREAS, greatly respected and admired for his keen insight and business acumen, Ted Welch was a senior fellow for public policy and politics and a member of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; he also served on the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce, FirstBank, and National Health Investors Corp (NHIC); and

WHEREAS, a local philanthropist and community leader, Mr. Welch was a founder of Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Center, an active participant and member of the Board of Directors of the Arts and Business Council of Greater Nashville, and a former board member of the Lexington Seminary; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Ted Welch received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the University of Tennessee at Martin and an Honorary Doctor of Law degree from Freed-Hardeman University, where he established a scholarship fund in honor of his late sister, Patsy Welch Peach; and

WHEREAS, Ted Houston Welch was preceded in death by his parents, Hilda Houston and Louis Welch; his sister, Patsy Welch Peach; his brother, Fred Welch; and his oldest daughter, Kala Welch MacLeod; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch is survived by his devoted wife of thirty years, Colleen Conway Welch; his daughters, Terri Welch Schmidt-Fellner and Alicia Welch Davenport; his sons-in-law, Don MacLeod, Blair Schmidt-Fellner, and David Davenport; and five grandchildren, Lauren

MacLeod, Meredith MacLeod, Tee Schmidt-Fellner, Alex Schmidt-Fellner, and Pierce Schmidt-Fellner; and

WHEREAS, he will be sadly mourned but fondly remembered by his sister, Mae Welch Phy; loving friend, Gwen Collier; his sisters-in-law, Peggy Conway and Kathy Conway, and her daughter, his goddaughter, Lexi Woop; and many nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Welch leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Ted Houston Welch, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Ted Houston Welch.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.